

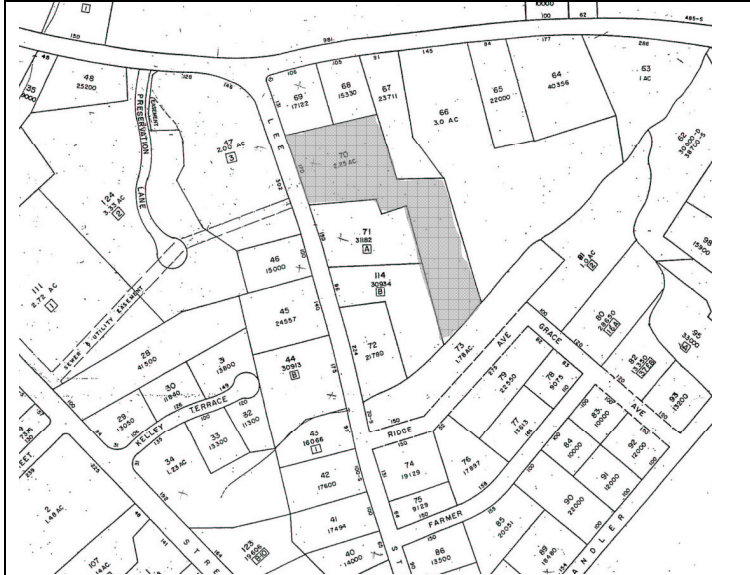
FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



Topographic or Assessor's Map



Recorded by: Julie Ann Larry

Organization: ttl-architects

Date (month / year): March 2010

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

61 70

TEW.17

Town: Tewksbury

Place: (*neighborhood or village*)
Tewksbury Center

Address: 18 Lee Street

Historic Name: Frank H Farmer House and Funeral Home

Uses: Present: Funeral Home

Original: Single Family Residence & Undertakers

Date of Construction: 1898

Source: Newspaper Article & Style

Style/Form: Colonial Revival

Architect/Builder:

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Granite

Wall/Trim: Clapboard

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
Rear Addition (mid 20th century)

Condition: Good

Moved: no | X | yes | | **Date** _____

Acreage: 2.25 Acres

Setting: Set on a relatively flat lot on the edge of the village center.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

TEWKSBURY

18 LEE STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Area(s) Form No.

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___ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The former residence at 18 Lee Street is a Colonial Revival in style. The three by two bay funeral home retains several character defining features including: the symmetrical front façade, the projecting portico, the flanking bay windows, the two story bay projecting from the north elevation, the centrally located projecting gable bay over the main entrance, and the gable roof dormers on the north, south, and east roof slopes. The irregular plan rests on a granite foundation. The walls are clad in painted wood clapboards. The roof forms are sheathed in asphalt shingles. The primary fenestration is 2/1 wood sash windows.

The entry portico features a hip roof with a deep frieze band. The band extends across the adjacent bays and includes dentil mold. The roof of the porch is supported by round paired columns with Ionic capitals at the corners and singular columns on either side of the entry stair. Above the entry portico, the central projecting gable dormer is supported by large decorative brackets on either side of the narrower second story bay. Vertical boards above either first floor bay indicate there may have been a balustrade across the top of each bay. A half-round multi-pane window is located in the central projecting gable. The detailed surround features a keystone.

The irregularly shaped plan is a result of multiple additions at the rear (east) of the building. Two gable ells project from the east of the house and are surrounded by a large one-story L-shaped addition. The one-story addition includes two overhead garage doors. A second entrance on the south elevation is protected by a small projecting portico. A set of stairs and a modern ramp provide access to the elevated entrance.

The former residence is surrounded on the south and east by a large paved parking lot. A hedgerow separates the parking lot from the yard of 30 Lee Street (TEW.)

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

According to the Assessor's database and local history the house at 18 Lee Street was built c 1870 by William H Lee, the son of George Lee, a prominent local businessman. George Lee moved to Tewksbury from Attleborough, MA between 1837-1839.¹ George established a tannery in the center of Tewksbury to the west of his house at 53 Lee Street (MHC# TEW.19). George and his first Harriet Gould had three children. His daughter Mary Augusta married Frank Martin Spaulding and they built a house at 30 Lee Street (MHC# TEW.18) c 1865. Their son William H Lee, succeeded his father in the tannery business after his death in 1883. William H Lee also built a home near the corner of Lee and East Streets at 18 Lee Street c 1870.

Franklin Martin Spaulding was a Civil War veteran assigned to the First United States Colored Calvary. He served for three years and upon returning to Massachusetts at the end of the war, married Mary Lee in 1865. He worked for Spaulding Bros, a paper warehouse on Milk Street in Boston after the War.

William Lee and Mary Spaulding split their father's estate in 1884. William acquired the land to the east of Lee Street, and the house at 17 Lee Street. In 1889 he sold his house at 18 Lee Street to Frank H Farmer.

¹ George Lee married Harriet Gould in Attleborough in 1837. Their first child, Mary Augusta was born in Tewksbury in 1839.

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According to an article in the New York Times the “house and barn of Frank H Farmer was burned this morning [November 7, 1898] at Tewksbury together with a horse and 30 tons of hay.² The physical character of the house and the fact that there was a significant fire in 1898 would indicate a construction date closer to 1898 than 1870. An interior investigation might indicate if any remnant of the c1870 exist.

Farmer, an undertaker, contractor, operator of a fire insurance business, and dealer in wood and coal served as a Selectman for the Town of Tewksbury as well as its Police Chief 1915-1920. Farmer married his wife Susan Delmarge in 1873. They had six children including a son, Henry Louis Farmer, who was undertaker with his father at the house on Lee Street. Frank Farmer subdivided the land to the south of his house along Farmer Street in 1909. Frank died in 1921. In 1927 his wife Susan willed the house and +/- six acres to Henry Louis Farmer, who resided on Main Street opposite the Foster School.

Formerly the FH Farmer and Son undertakers, then the H Louis Farmer Funeral Home, the building is currently occupied by the Farmer and Dee Funeral Home. According to the current funeral home business, it has been in operation since 1878.

Additional owners include: Frank H Farmer (1889-1927); H Louis Farmer (1927-1967); H Louis Farmer Jr, of Ocean Ridge Florida, Trustee of the Lee & Summer Nominee Trust (1967-2000); and Bradford Dee Jr Trustee of the Folger Realty Trust (2000-2010).



BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Tewksbury Street Directory. Mass: (s.n.) 1901. 1912.

Valuation of the Real and Personal Estate of the Town of Tewksbury for the Year. 1890. 1940. 1960.

Tewksbury List of Residents. 1965. 1975.

North Middlesex County Registry of Deeds.

Ancestry.com

² *The New York Times* 11/8/1898.

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